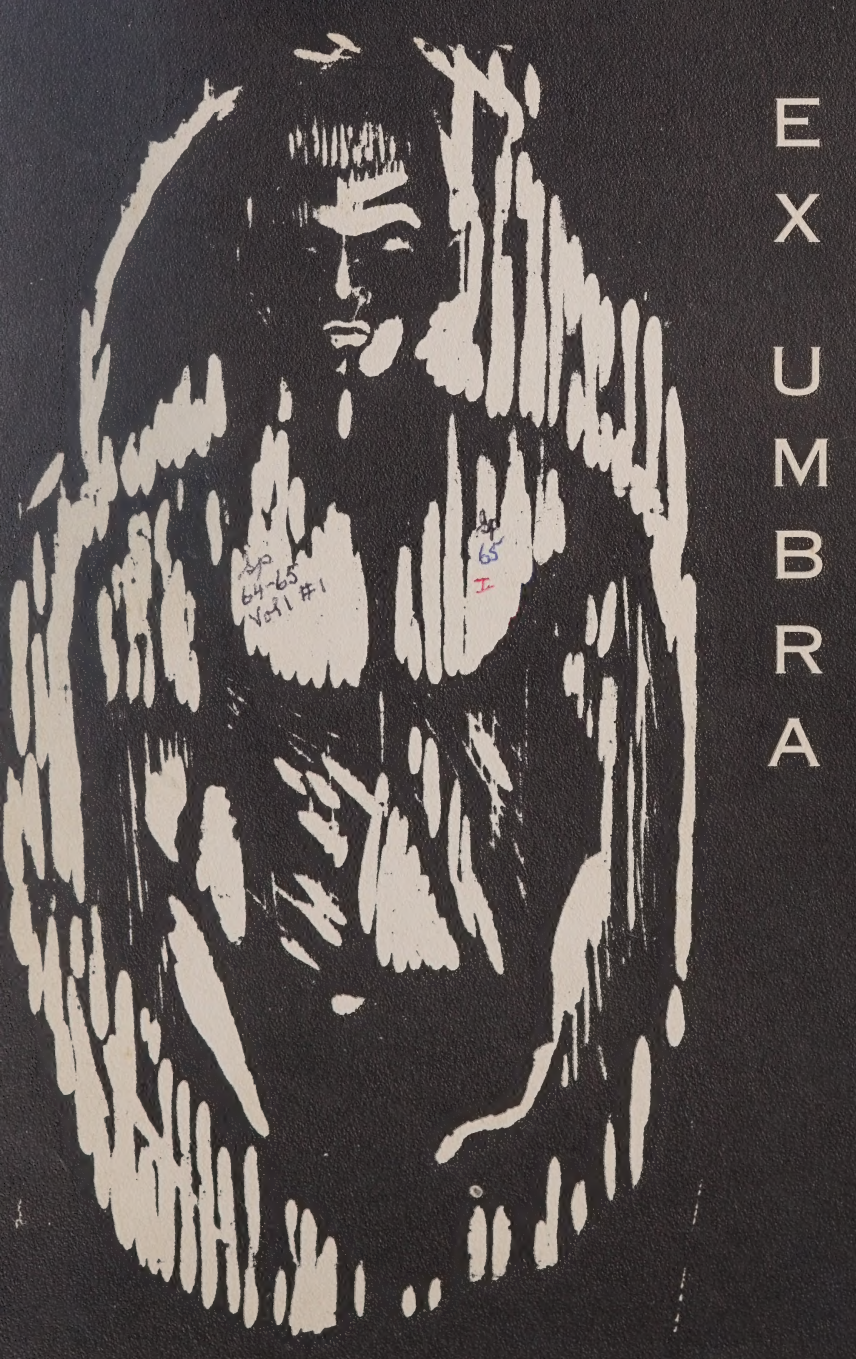

EX UMBRA

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EX UMBRA

The Literary Magazine of North Carolina College at Durham

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Editors' Note

The name of this magazine, Ex Umbra, *is Latin for "out of the shadows". There are two reasons that the staff chose to call the magazine by that name. First, the staff agreed that the creative students at North Carolina College at Durham were too much in the shadows, and that they needed to be brought out into the light where their fellow students could recognize their talent and enjoy their work. Second, the staff also agreed that creative students at predominately-Negro colleges throughout the south were in the same situation, that too much good talent was going unrecognized. The idea of this magazine was to create a forum whereby this talent could be given the light of recognition. We felt that the title,* Ex Umbra, *expresses this idea. We hope that this first issue will be followed by many more, and that the magazine will bring to light still other students at North Carolina College at Durham and elsewhere who can, like the students presented in this volume, shed some light on experience.*

--The Editors and
The Staff

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poem

i saw one day a man sleeping.
i looked for a long time as he slept
on top of the water, at croton beach.
i was young, yes very young and understood
very little.
as the sun smiled over my head
and on the man's back
he didn't move;
just the water, and maybe the air.
soon but not too soon, the sun started
to move
also.
the water moved closer and closer
so did the sleeping man
before i knew it, that sleeping man
was closer to me
i was young very young and understood
very little
but
as the sun kissed her children good-night:
the ocean
the sand
the land
the man
        and me;
i moved on, leaving the sleeping man
covered with sand,
to be guarded by his nurse,
the moon.

--Otis Bagley
NCC at Durham

A chirp

And again the sun's radiance shadows the earth,
The cry seems a melody,
Her touch excites the fragrance of passion,
Dominant in itself life.

A diligence to the doe
Her warmth
complexing a firey heaven
Being thy staff love.

--Ray Arrington
NCC at Durham

FANCY AND ME

Fancy Francis was my friend. He drifted in one winter from the Pacific Coast. Was a woman made him leave his much loved San Francisco for New York City. My name is Maria but Fancy called me Junior Flip because I was so much younger than he. Fifteen I was and he...Fancy was ageless. At times he had the innocence of a kid, wide-eyed and seeking. Yet he was totally disenchanted, always meeting reality headlong; he had the wisdom that is only revealed through the passing of time.

Fancy my prince. Nights he'd stand by his window looking into the noisy streets. I'd watch him. He was 6'3", a strong man with large but gentle hands. He had a smile that could light up whose ever world he entered. Eyes, shining eyes that never stayed set but danced to some unheard tune. So much compassion had he for mankind that it sometimes became contempt. For he cared so much he loathed to witness the unnecessary destruction that daily prevailed.

I never knew my father and looking back perhaps Fancy filled some necessary image for me. I do know that whenever I think of who I am and where I'm going my thoughts turn to Fancy. My sweet Fancy, who showed me the love of life and the acceptance of death. So many different sights, tastes, and sounds made known to me by him.

What I remember most, what I shall never forget is the last time I saw Fancy. Christmas came. He and I made a playground of the snow-laden sidewalks and romped joyously block after block never once minding the cold. Picture it, I with my hand tightly in his, following his quick running steps. Then stop...scooping up snow, packing and hurling it. Stumbling, falling all the while, laughing. Finally surrendering to fatigue. Fancy says "lets race to the coffee shop, we'll rest and get warm." I smile and shake my head, then turn and begin the journey. Laughing, still laughing, I victorious get there first. I turn to shout my victory and I see Fancy, my Fancy slowly walking away. He is blocks away and I call out. He merely waves goodbye. I think I see him smile. All I do is stand there and watch him recede till he is no more. Something kept me there, something commanded me to stay. I've never asked an explanation of his entrance and exit in my life, 'cause my Fancy was too good to be true.

--Diane Bryant
NCC at Durham

THE VISION OF YOUTH

Ours is a strange age. We live in an age of an ever-expanding social order. The benefits of science and industry have made us a prosperous nation. For the most part, we get what we want, or at least what we thing we want. We own our homes, we hold memberships in prestigious clubs, and we possess many of the outward characteristics of an affluent society. Here a strange paradox exists, for our age has also brought us confusion and anxiety in the midst of great material comfort. Something is wrong. We should be the happiest nation in the world, but we are not by any means. We are instead an anxious nation. The pressures of life have escalated the development of modern psychiatry, for we are in a perpetual search for some kind of relief from the thousands of daily cares of our century. Is this pursuit of tranquility a healthy sign? What does it say about us? Is it potentially dangerous, a sad commentary on our present era?

How has this age affected its young people? This is a pertinent question, for the ideas and attitudes of young people are a clear indication of the strength or weakness of a nation. Wherein lies the hope of the nation, but in the young men and women that it trains? What does the young person see when he looks about him? How can he not see a society in moral decay, a society that has over-emphasized materialism at the expense of humanism? We have fast become a nation of soul-less people. We have developed a society that wastes its lives and energies in anxious pursuits that have no real underlying moral value.

What does this mean? It means that there is an ever-increasing need for a re-committment to moral values in a materialistic age. Humanitarian values do not automatically replenish themselves. They depend for their existence upon the continuing committment of those who embrace them. The future of spiritual life in America depends upon the ability of the nation's young people to act as forces for reform. The older generation is too much involved in the materialism of the age. It cannot see the emptiness of the nation's soul. Suspended in a state between childhood and adulthood, youth can see farthest for it has most vision.

Action has become the watchword of youth. We have popularized the things past generations have hated most. We frequently shock and enrage our parents with ideas of a new morality. For all this, we have won the name of the "beat generation". We are condemned for our disregard of established values and norms, but those who condemn us fail to realize that we are products of our age who see our task as that of reform rather than acceptance. We can no longer accept the beautiful but highly romanticized childhood picture of the world. Our daily experience and historical knowledge point out all too clearly that the world of romanticism is a cruel hoax.

We tear away the veil and reveal the world as it is, a world of barbarous outrages against humanity -- Hitler's merciless slaughter of the Jews, the nuclear destruction of Hiroshima, the reign of Stalinistic terror, the brutal suppression of the Hungarian revolution, the nightmare of racial injustic and the constant threat of nuclear war. All around us we see our contemporaries scheming and plotting, ignoring the values that they offer to young people as sacred. Is it any wonder that this young generation rejects the older generation's hypocrisy?

The youth of this generation must make its own methods tally with its principles. We have been witnesses to the gradual breakdown of old forms. We feel that we are about to enter into a new era which shall usher in new ideas of social justice and a new emphasis on human values. We hold that the world is moving with us toward the fulfillment of this new era. Old patterns and old forms must evolve into new patterns capable of restoring value to human existence. In this process of evolution, the present social order must be subservient to the demands of a re-invigorated, humanistic, young society. We must reject all customs and traditions which act as stumbling blocks to moral goals. Civil disobedience can be a justifiable tactic in combatting unjust laws. Men are not infallible. They can pervert their power to deny natural rights. And there is a natural order that the laws of man cannot violate without impunity, for human ideals have priority over the imperfections created by individual men. We hold that sanction for our course of action can be gained through an appeal to a higher law.

Where are these new forms arising from? The answer to this is incorporated in this generation's view of history. For we see history as the unfolding of conscious design wherein fortune plays little part. Man is the creator and molder of history. These new patterns are deeply imbedded in the universe. If they are to arrive at fruiting, however, they will do so as a result of conscious design. Nazi Germany came to its hegemony and changed the course of mankind's development. This is an example of the power, perverted as it was, that may be exerted when man seizes the organic structure whereby history unfolds. Society itself is the physical manifestation of this organic structure, for it is in society that men interact and produce their history. If Nazism can triumph in this process of interaction, can we not use this same process in the service of humanity? Can we not become the instrument whereby these new forms are brought to fruition. We -- America's youth -- want a chance to write our chapter in the story of man. Our goal is simple -- we seek access to history.

--Leslie Smith, Jr.
St. Paul's College, Virginia

THE BRIDGE

I stand here facing a seemingly never-ending span of steel and concrete. I see the silhouette of the bridge; its beauty is enhanced by its long, smooth, low curvature that adds to its impressiveness in the night. I hear no human voice. An automobile passes over; I observe its glide over the arc of the bridge... I hear a voice! The words were incomprehensible because of the distance and the abrupt delivery.

Now the night is quiet again. It is breezy and very chilly. The black shadow of the bridge reflects on the dark shadowed water beneath it. The lights over the bridge produce a halo; its true majesty can only be seen at night.

Perhaps the bridge should be the master rather than the slave of man because of its gigantic proportion to its master; yet it is his slave because it works for him. The bridge was built for man's purposes and for these purposes it will serve; it can do no more than man intends. The bridge stands great but humble and so it is with all those things that man has built for his use.

--Leroy Walker
Morgan State College, Baltimore

LOVE, HATE, AND DIVINITY

Love, hate, and divinity:
These seem the ideas of society.
But after thought, and searching my soul
I see that society's final toll
Doesn't hold any divinity
But love, hate, and complacency.

--Morris Barrier
NCC at Durham

CONRAD: *character sketch from a novel-in-progress*

"Charles, git up!" his mother called to him. It was five o'clock when he had gone for a short nap. He hadn't bothered to take off his clothes, but he did take off his shoes. He could never sleep worth a damn with his shoes on. But instead of a two-hour nap, he slept until nine o'clock.

Summer evenings were hot and dark in his house. He got up in a sweat, thinking "I wish this house wasn't so high." He paused for a minute to yawn. "O-O-O-O-h! You'll burn up in this damn place." The houses surrounding the elevated building where he lived with his mother and two sisters were much taller than his, which made the place even hotter and darker. On many of these hot nights he would wish over and over again that the other houses would explode. It was impossible to eat, to sleep, or to do any damn thing for that matter.

He went out of his house, down the steps that led from the front door, to the street thirteen feet away. There was a large fishbox that always set at the edge of the sidewalk near the street. When it got terribly not, he would sit on the fishbox for two or three hours; the long box gave light to his darkness and ventilation to the hot evenings. It also brought him friends.

His mother brought him a pitcher of iced tea and went back into the house. He sat on the fishbox drinking the tea and listening to his portable radio. A man approached the fishbox with sweat running off him like he had just taken a hot shower and had not dried himself. He was heavy set, about two-hundred-fifty pounds, and very tall. He came up to the boy saying "Mind if I sit on your box?" The boy tried to reply with a smile, and said "I-I-I-I do-don't mind." His mouth twisted and filled with spit which rolled down his cheeks as he tried to say those words in a friendly manner. The man reached to his own mouth to remove a big cigar, and hung his head as if he were ashamed and surprised. He was stunned, because he had not known that the boy could not speak well.

The man sat there for ten minutes before he spoke again. "What's wrong...I'm sorry...I didn't know..." The boy wanted to tell the man that there was nothing to be sorry for, but instead he sort of pushed a glass of tea towards him. He put a piece of gum in his mouth and said, "I-i-i-it's h-h-hot." The man replied "Yep! It sho' is!" The boy was full of questions, but he was careful to make them short and concise because he didn't want to drive the man away before they entered into a conversation. So he asked him "What y-you do for a livin'?" "I'm a jack of all trades and a master at none," he replied, and burst out laughing until tears ran

down his cheeks. They talked for a while, and the man said "I don't know your name." "Just call me Ch-chuck." The man's name was William Conrad.

Conrad finally had to leave, but every day he would stop on his way from work to talk to the boy...

Chuck called him Bill now because William was too lengthy. Every day Conrad came by to see him; if Chuck wasn't on the fish-box, Conrad would call "Chuck, ol' boy, where are ya!" When Bill called like that Chuck would hurriedly stumble down the steps, trying to control the semi-paralyzed side of his body. Conrad would say then "Boy! Ya goin' ta break ya blasted neck."

Conrad wore laundered shirts every day, and an old brown suit that was neat and well pressed; Chuck thought it made him look distinguished. His shoes were cheap but they had a conservative look. He pleased the boy with his laughter and his jokes. "Chuck ol' boy, what did t'at sinner say to the preacher?" "I-I-I do' kn-kn-know; what?" "Go to hell!" And they would burst out laughing. "Ha-ha-ha-ha....wun't that good, boy." "Ya Bill, it sh-sh-sho' is."

As the weeks went on Bill and Chuck had many talks, drank many Pepsis and listened to the Prince Ike show on the portable radio. Conrad sensed that he was satisfying the boy's need for friendship. He also wanted to help him struggle with his handicaps. He would buy him things, and would try to bribe Chuck into doing his therapeutic exercises. "Boy, if you catch this ball ten times, when I come by tomorrow, I'll give you a quarter." He tried to give Chuck fortitude and courage as well. "Boy, what we gonna do tonight?" "I-I-I-I don-n't know. A-a-annnny thing ya wan-nta do, Vill." "Ah, boy," Conrad replied with a tone of disgust, "take ya time and say *'B*ill'." Chuck waited, and said "B-B-Bill." "Good boy!"

"Well, boy, I think we have somethin' up," Conrad continued."We can go to the movies, or go aroun' to the Reb's house and play checkers with that fat creecher." They laughed. They went to see the Reverend.

Chuck liked the Reverend because the man could conduct interesting practical conversations, was fat, and eccentric. The Reb wore a big parson's hat, darker and dirtier than his black skin, and one black double-breasted suit. He wore them everywhere, preaching, working in his grocery store, fishing, any place. He lived in a little unpainted narrow box-like shack built by his church as a sort of community house. If someone wanted him, he would holler "Come-in Reb?" and from the back of the long shack the Reverend would holler back "Come-in, brother, I'm a-cookin' up some catfish stew fuh ma supper." The stew was so pungent that the drunks who knew the Reb, knew when it was Friday night.

Besides fishing or eating the Reverend liked playing "the old red and black game." He liked it better than preparing his sermon for Sunday morning; he liked it better than running his grocery store. Sometimes Conrad and Chuck would stay and let the Reb beat them until one o'clock in the morning.

But the Reb was humiliating at times. "Chuck, bring me that numbskull of yours and let me whup ya a game of checkers!" he would shout to the boy. Because Chuck was naive and could not speak well enough to answer him quickly, the Reb didn't spare him. Chuck hadn't gone to the Reb's house very much before he met Conrad...

--Charles Stokes
NCC at Durham

THOUGHTS ON POETRY

I read from Coleridge, Wordsworth, Burns;
With inexpressible emotion my heart churns:
When, on the muse, I begin deep concentration,
I am often filled with poetic inclination.
But poetry must *express* deep feelings.
And although my heart seems high as heaven's ceiling
My expression holds no formula.

I must express in a simple way
My thoughts on poetry.
The feelings of vigorous heart and amateur pen
Don't make poetic rhymes blend.
I speak in couplets just to express
My reactions and emotions.

--Morris Barrier
NCC at Durham

OBSERVATIONS

Poem

where is everbody?
man, dark, silent, felled; now who will walk with Me?

Child

Out of the innocent harrassed
Amongst the arctic fear
(the ardent intent of vile)
Adorned with the sanctimony
Of a virgin; Mary.

Poem

A moment of awe,
Beauty the Lily's
Fate's execution.

Night

About the chamber, yet beyond perception,
Interrupted only by illuminate points;
The space accents the lane of progress.

Poem

Pigeon, from ceil to the dust glide.
Birth, with no end, ascend.

calf of

a squirrel resting on a twig of Oak.

--Ray Arrington
NCC at Durham

GOETHE'S *FAUST:* THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAUST AND MEPHISTOPHELES IN RESPECT TO GOD

The relationship between Faust and Mephistopheles in respect to God is one of unity or similarity; they are both in conflict with God. Faust begins as one of God's servants; Mephistophelese is a fallen angel, once one of God's highest servants but one who has become his major adversary. Mephistopheles assumes that he is as great as God, if not greater, and to prove it he attempts to seduce one of God's devoted servants. Through the attempts of Mephistopheles, Faust joins the devil's party for a while.

Faust as a learned man, a great seeker after knowledge, and a human being capable of making mistakes,is the perfect medium through which God and Mephistopheles can contest as to which of them is the greater. In "The Prologue in Heaven", Mephistopheles comments on the wager between him and God concerning Faust's soul; he says to God,

> There's still a chance to gain him,
> If unto me full leave you give,
> Gently upon my road to train him! (ll. 70-72)*

These lines indicate Mephistopheles' ambition, and his confidence that he can, through Faust, win the honor that is rightfully due to God. God's reply indicates his willingness to give Mephistopheles a chance to compete:

> As long as he on earth shall live,
> So long I make no prohibition.
> While Man's desires and aspirations stir,
> He cannot choose but err....
>
> What thou has asked is granted. (ll.73-76; 82)

But God's reply also indicates that it is part of man's nature to encounter some failure of his aspirations. This aspect of man is represented by Faust who fails to obtain all knowledge, but who keeps striving because he knows that not all of failure is non-profitable since knowledge only comes with experience.

Faust is the right person for God and Mephistopheles to try to win, because the conflict between good and evil, or God and Mephistopheles, is already a part of Faust himself as a result of his desire to know everything. Faust's conflict can be described in

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*All quotations are taken from the Bayard Taylor translation.

psychological terms as the "approach-avoidance tendency" in that Faust wants to know everything about the world but does not want to experience evil.

Faust as an inner-directed individual is representative of God's power in nature, and indeed his search is in part for the secret of that power. But he seeks that knowledge through the ordinary scholastic disciplines and becomes outer-directed; thus Mephistopheles is able to lure him off the course of righteousness for a while, and Faust accepts the aid of the devil where he wanted to avoid evil. In this way he is very much like Mephistopheles who accepts a wager that he should know is loaded against him, and Faust's own intuition of the impossibility of his pursuit increases the similarity. Both Mephistopheles and Faust know that they are created as part of God's larger whole. They are wise enough to know that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts: Faust sums the results of his various academic achievements and finds the total insignificant; in the "Prologue in Heaven" Mephistopheles admits, with the other angels, that he cannot understand the workings of the universe. Both of them know that the whole is greater than any of its parts. In reply to one of Faust's first questions as to his identity, Mephistopheles says that he is

> Part of that Power, not understood,
> Which always wills the Bad, and always works the Good.
> (Scene III,ll.159-160)

This statement indicates that Mephistopheles does not understand the nature of his being and suggests that he knows he is inferior to his creator. Faust recognizes his limitations as well, especially in the scene between him and the Earth Spirit whose sight and power are too great for Faust to endure.

In spite of these recognitions, both Faust and Mephistopheles try to extend themselves beyond their limitations. Thus Mephistopheles does not tempt Faust as much as he responds to a part of Faust's nature that is already there. That part is the evil; and Mephistopheles relieves Faust of the fear of the evil in his own nature by objectifying it and, seemingly absorbing it, leaving Faust free to continue his pursuit whereas before the arrival of Mephistopheles Faust oscillated between hope and despair, resolution and surrender. Both Faust and Mephistopheles then, have a quest for power that tends to color any reasoning ability that they might posess and that might warn them against their quests. In so far as Fausth and Mephistopheles are ambitious and let their desires overpower their better judgments, they can be said to be the same person.

Faust, torn between God and Mephistopheles, represents the two aspects of man's nature, good and evil. Mephistopheles, on the other hand, is symbolic of an extreme force that has no tendency towards good and is always trying to corrupt nature by bringing about similar states of dis-equilibrium. Faust, then, represents one of God's created beings who, with Mephistopheles' coaching, can break his state of equilibrium in which both good and evil are alternate attractions, and enter into a statewhere the tension seems to relieved. In so far as Faust wants an eternity of the pleasant moment, part of his trouble is balance. Mephistopheles provides an inbalance that seems to free Faust. Thus both Faust and Mephistopheles are trying to control the forces of nature and to fashion nature according to their desires, and this aspect of their personality further establishes their unity of being. And it is a common desire in relationship to God, for in the "Prologue in Heaven" Raphael, Gabriel , Michael *and* Mephistopheles admit that the secrets of the universe are known only to God. And God does not allow the desires of Mephistopheles or Faust to be fulfilled because the fulfillment of those desires would lead to an end of the equilibrium within nature and within the human soul. This becomes clear when we remember that Mephistopheles is capable of willing to do only evil, but that Faust is capable of willing both good and evil. Due to man's desire to have only pleasure or knowledge to the exclusion of any hardship, duty, or spiritual value, Faust is always striving to break the balance.

In conclusion, Mephistopheles is the perfect devil for Faust because both are in opposition to God, their creator, in the same way. They both have a quest for power which colors their ability to reason. It is because of these attitudes in relationship to God and the created universe that Faust and Mephistopheles can be said to be, in part, the same person.

--Ed Mitchell
NCC at Durham

WHILE ON THE REALM OF A DISTANT HILL

While on the realm of a distant hill
And all around is restful and still
I think on my path in life.

Servant of sin, slave of strife,
Yet I praise him who paid the price.
Whose am I?

Though touching on the edge of serenity,
My thoughts are filled with enmity,
My soul is belligerent.

My surroundings out to tranquilize,
Lift the troubles, erase the why's
Kindled by society.

I can see distant lakes and streams,
The kindling and inspiration of poets' themes,
A soul's refreshing sensation.

Despondent thoughts are soon spent.
My heart yields, stills, consents.
An enlightenment unexplainable.

To ease my soul finally arrives.
Through nature's beauty, I realize
I am not my own.

--Morris Barrier
NCC at Durham

THREE POEMS

a Line

I sense nature's boundary
Where dust grows of lilies
And no rain to quench, thirst.

Upon a child, the glance of rape
Beneath the pavilion clad in dew:
Response?

Poem

Implore the heaven for a burglar
In the barren.
Long to spy a slit of rainbow,
A slender leaf, or a petal of
Any or all rooting in defiance
Of sahara's wind.

--*Ray Arrington*
NCC at Durham

SOLILOQUY

Mortal as I am, tempted to doubt
The strange, the new, the unknown;
Be it known, be it proclaimed
By tongue, wind and things unseen:
With unfaultering trust and abiding faith
Do I my heart my mind now open
To receive, to explore and endlessly endure
This thing, this phantom, this more than emotion
That has like an angelic vision
Revealed itself to me.
Speak my tongue, speak my heart,
And let your praises be known.

For a thing of beauty is not a thing to doubt,
Be it ever so strange, ever so new;
And let me see that this is neither strange nor new,
For beauty is not and beauty this is.
Give thanks my heart, give from your very soul,
For having been found, for finding, for realizing
And most of all for being deemed worthy of this love.

--*Sandra D. Thompson*
Morgan State College, Baltimore

WINSTON

An Isle within the dawn:
During the dull rumble of the era
Of the nucleus decomposing
"Damn everybody" he said,
And went off.

--*Ray Arrington*
NCC at Durham

WHO IS THE ENEMY?

Once again we find that the greediness of death's hunger has no end, and equally so respects no age, and rightfully so is blind to color. So who he was is not important, but what he did brings certain sentiments to our everyday experience. He had made his bed in the streets of the earth and the sky was his only blanket. The burdens of his life were heavy and he had borne the trials of the cross for a season. His skin was not wrinkled nor had his eyes faded. Decades would pass before he would earn the title of "mister" but even at his young age he had experienced more of life than most men who are fifty. If age were determined by experience, his head would be frosty white, his limbs would be bent with time, his body feeble and aching, and his speech would be less than slow. However, he was not of age. He was young, fair, tender, and his bright eyes sparkled as if he knew some secret that only God had shared with him. Perhaps he saw a crown, or a cross, or even Christ himself; whatever he saw, it made his eyes sparkle and his lips smile, and such a sight brought tears to my eyes.

I had never seen him before, nor was he my son, but the thought of the things he had suffered made me weep the more. He did not tell a story nor could his lips really speak, but meekness and humility made a painting that no one can forget. His clothes were faded and torn, themselves telling a story that only he could express. His feet were bare and the dirt matched the color of his skin. I looked closely at his naked body -- cold, frail, and exposed to the wind. The winds blew and gathered mountains of trash around him. Papers soared, fluttered, danced, wove, and played viciously over his face. Nevertheless, he lay there motionless as if there were some joy in death's final communion. It was then that I realized for the first time the power of the enemy.

Tear fountains formed heavily in my eyes and I wondered how long he had been there, and how many nights he had gone cold, hungry lonely, and had roamed the night viciously like the wolf. I stood there before him crying; his whole body told a story. Hunger had been his constant companion, and the winds and rains slashing bullies. Strong winds had lashed at his tattered clothes, and the sun had dried and faded what the weathers had left untorn.

Crying and sympathizing, I wondered just where his story could have begun. But I thought of his clothes, his color, and his conditions, and I understood his story from beginning to end. At one time the birds had awakened him and the clouds had rolled back his only cover. He had picked himself up and thought of his tiring and lonesome journey. Once he had tried to sleep eternally, but the hunger that lived within him had mercilessly robbed him of his dream and his peace.

Again he was at the road, but this time death would grant him

peace. His thoughts must have been on the labors of life for on this dump he had found his golden moment. The color of his skin could tell many stories, from his ancestry to his presence here; however, the body of a child dying on a dump tells a story far more reaching than color.

Each morning he would arise, stretch, yawn, and wonder where he would go. But deep down inside of him he knew, he had always known. He would go where he had always gone; he would go to the only place he could go. So he set out on his journey not for fun or adventure, but for food to sustain his frail body. Then he found it, a place where garbage cans paraded as soldiers and none of them were well dressed. He no doubt dismissed the multitude of cans. Perhaps there was some favorite, some can he had found when he first visited the dump, some old, worn, odorous can that he had found and clung to for dear life.

He did not launch upon it as a villain, but perhaps treated it as a gentle friend. Even in his heart I believe he gave thanks, thanks for whatever food he could find and whatever it might be. To him there was no garbage, there was only unwanted food to sustain his frail body, and enable him to bear the cross for one more day. The odor of the can alone was pungent and the garbage itself was unbearable. Nevertheless, to him the odor was like flowers and the garbage of delicate taste. He passed his hand within the can and instantly his frail arm was covered white. His mind and heart were innocent and he made no motion even though the maggots clung.

On one occasion he had gone three days and found no food. It was then that his innocent mind turned on the crawling food and it sustained him once more. Again maggots crawled on his arm but he would eat them only if there was no other. Gently his hand moved until it struck bread -- hard, cold -- and crumbled it, but his eyes sparkled, his lips smiled, and his mouth moistened, and he gave thanks for his daily bread. The maggots crawling and sliding had already covered his arm, but he prayed his thankful prayer and joyfully ate. Maggots fell from the bread and some never escaped his teeth. Yet an innocent child ate maggots and bread in perfect contentment and peace. Hunger had forced him to the cans, but only God's love could have given him humility and peace. The maggots were crawling frantically above and then below his mouth but not once did he move. Yet he clasped his hand around the bread and bit into it again and again. Such peace, such contentment, such beauty, when one's life is so burdened makes even the strongest heart weep. The aged bread soon crumbled, and like a bird he plucked the crumbs from the ground. When he finished, he returned to the cans and found more bread and his lips smiled. Here he stayed and ate more bread, not knowing that it was his last. He was poor and didn't know how or why. Perhaps he had never thought of it. Quite often he had eaten this way for he knew no other.

Poverty was always present with his race, but he knew nothing of color; he knew only of the dumps and the cans. Perhaps his family was unemployed, or too large to support him; perhaps he was an illegtimate child. There could have been many reasons that he was there, but he knew none of them. He was only six and a child. He had come for his daily bread not knowing he would eat no more. He ate bread, and the maggots fell from his teeth, and he thought of his day of peace, He never left the dumps, he fell at the table where he had obtained his bread.

Bread had sustained his life; now bread was taking his life. His danger was unforseen, and little did he know that his daily bread was poison. I wept as I stood there. The body of a lone, frail, innocent child dying on a dump is a mournful sight. Nevertheless, the peace and contentment which a burdened life finds in death is known only to God. Who is the menace that led this child here to find his death among the cans? Was it his race, his nature, his family, or poverty that knows no race, color, or conditions? Who is this menace?

The winds blew and gathered mountains of trash around him. The papers soared, fluttered, danced, and wove and played viciously over his face. Nevertheless, he lay there motionless as if there were some joy in death's final communion. I looked at the dying child, my eyes filled with tears...WHO IS THE ENEMY?

--J.T. Clemons
NCC at Durham

poem

o tell me
tell me i say, i say
is life really that way,
that way
negroes, i say
persecuted that way.
why oh, why i do say
is it not true my dear
that you hate me
for no other reason
than that i am black
my dear?

that is the truth.

i see.
please forgive me
for being
born that
way
my dear.

--Otis Bagley
NCC at Durham

enD

One becomes aware of the instinctive
Gentle diffusion of the seasons
And the Child born of the wind
When a robin ascends the crest.

Awakened by a Child's cry
I stumbled upon the seeD
Vainly placed subjacent to a leaf.

A belladonna drifting over the dales
Dancing in to the SoN.

--Ray Arrington
NCC at Durham